



Family News

August 2003

News and Information for Families of individuals at Muscatatuck SDC and Madison State Hospital during the transition to community-based services.

Muscatatuck State Developmental Center

Parent's Advisory Council

Muscatatuck State Developmental Center Superintendent Jackie Bouyea formed a Parent's Advisory Council after the announcement of the facility's closure. An initial council meeting of seven individuals met in July of 2000 and began the establishment of by-laws. The purpose of the council is to advise the Superintendent on issues regarding the facility, its plant, and its general operation as related to the well-being of the residents. The following four responsibilities were adopted:

1. To establish goals and objectives consistent with the needs of MSDC and its residents;
2. To participate in the review of the MSDC budget;
3. To assist in a facility-wide strategic plan that achieves the following goals:
 - a. Identifying current resources,
 - b. Identifying unmet service needs, and
 - c. Identifying priority recommendations for the Center; and
4. To act as a focal point for participation in facility-wide activities such as:
 - a. Advocating for the needs of the facility on behalf of its residents,
 - b. Advocating for appropriate programs and services,
 - c. Advising facility administrators on the administration of services,

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FSSA Secretary Hamilton Responds To Your Questions

Q How will DMHA meet the FSSA key priority of expanding home and community-based services for an additional 800 children?

A DMHA will partner with the Division of Family and Children (DFC) to achieve this important priority. The two divisions will focus on:

- Early mental health screening and intervention for children when they enter the DFC system,
- Treatment of children with serious emotional disturbances using a System of Care approach that enhances the collaboration between service providers, and
- Pursuit of a Medicaid waiver for children with serious emotional disturbances who are at risk of institutionalization.

Q How will DMHA meet the FSSA key priority of expanding home and community-based services for an additional 480 adults with mental illness or an addiction?

A DMHA will achieve this priority by working to:

- Expand mental health/addiction services that drive recovery outcomes,
- Expand Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) by pursuing a new ACT rule which ensures that critical services can be paid for by Medicaid,

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(Q & A, continued from page 1)

- Implement new mental health/addiction criminal justice diversion programs that focus on effective treatment, and
- Provide a new crisis counseling service for victims of natural or man-made disasters.

Q How will DMHA meet the FSSA key priority of building self-sufficiency by increasing the number of successful supported employment closures?

A Employment is a top priority for DMHA because it reduces dependence on the public mental health system and is therapeutic for the consumer. We will take the following action steps to achieve this priority:

- Implement metrics to track the number of successful supported employment closures and the supported employment cycle times,
- Partner with the Vocational Rehabilitation team and providers to streamline the supported employment process,
- Sponsor the Supported Employment technical assistance center to reinforce best practices, and
- Pilot performance-based contracts to reward providers for achieving employment outcomes.

Next month you will hear from newly appointed FSSA Secretary Pat Rios. Secretary Rios will officially begin work at FSSA on Monday, October 1, 2003.



(MSDC Parent's Advisory Council, continued from page 1)

- d. Reviewing the annual budget, and
- e. Acting as the liaison with community businesses and leaders for the benefit of residents.

Council meetings are held monthly. A council subgroup developed and completed a beautification project resulting in the planting of flowers, shrubs, and bushes across campus. Council members have been updated on legislative and legal issues related to the facility's closure. Council members were also involved in an inservice for parents on the latest innovations being used by physical therapists, speech pathologists, and medical personnel.



Pictured left to right are: Harold Wesselman, Mary Louise Wesselman, Bea Nicoson, Mike Thomas, Irene Stainbrook, Irene Younger Qualkinbush, Robin Stearns, Carrie Burge, Jackie Bouyea, and Frances Egner.

John Hamilton, Secretary, Indiana Family and Social Services Administration, has resigned effective Monday, Oct. 1, 2003. John Dickerson, Executive Director, The Arc of Indiana, was quoted in The Indianapolis Star regarding the resignation, "He refused to accept less than the best effort from folks. There are thousands of families that he'll never meet in Indiana that are receiving services and support because he was trying to expand and figure out ways to do things." Hamilton has served as FSSA Secretary since July 1, 2001. Pat Rios, Governor O'Bannon's deputy chief of staff and legislative director, will serve as the agency's secretary during the final 15 months of his administration.

Group Homes Planned for Jennings County

Two new four-bed group homes are set for construction in Jennings County, targeted to serve medically fragile consumers currently housed at Muscatatuck State Developmental Center.

The eight beds were quickly spoken for, according to David Ross, vice president of AWS, Inc., the Fort Wayne-based not-for-profit organization that is developing the new homes in close collaboration with staff at Muscatatuck. "We feel fortunate that the State has opened this option, but we also feel equipped for this service opportunity," said Ross, who noted that AWS has operated two group homes for children with intense medical needs since the 1980s.

Ross said 12 families have signed letters of interest, with other families recently showing interest. "The demand is higher than the number of homes that are approved," Ross said.

One of the group homes will be located in Bluebird Estates (just west of North Vernon) and the other location is still being determined. Ross indicated that collaboration efforts have extended well beyond Muscatatuck staff and families and have included involvement with local developers/builders, the Chamber of Commerce and local real estate.

Ross praised the State's decision to keep the development of these homes in and around Jennings County. "The initiative then becomes enriching to the community as well as the people we intend to serve," the AWS official said.

Patty Cook, Muscatatuck's transition facilitator for medically fragile residents moving out of that facility, said families have been very enthusiastic about the new class of group homes that was first approved by DDARS last year.

"A request has been made for additional homes to be built," said Cook, who pointed out that the new license allows for one direct-care staff for each two residents. "The families like the increased number of staff and the focus on medical needs," she said. "The families especially appreciate the expanded nursing services."

Cook said that many of the Muscatatuck clients moving into the new group homes suffer from brittle diabetes, intractable seizures or a progressive neurological disorder. She added that they tend to be at risk for choking and aspiration pneumonia. Most of them are fed through a stomach tube or suctioned regularly. They have specialized positioning equipment and require close monitoring to maintain skin integrity.

Cook said AWS and Muscatatuck staff are working closely together to develop a person-centered plan for each individual. "This is truly a collaborative effort and an excellent opportunity for people with serious medical conditions," she added.

Ross said AWS staff has been meeting with family members since last October. Family members, Muscatatuck staff and case managers also visited the AWS headquarters at Fort Wayne, as well as AWS-operated group homes.

Ross added that AWS is eagerly looking forward to the day that the group homes are open. "This is a unique opportunity that fits our mission" Ross said.

AWS is not limiting its venture into the four-bed model to Jennings County. AWS has been approved for 10 such homes in South Bend and five in Fort Wayne. The closing of a local nursing home that served medically fragile and multiply disabled people prompted building of the South Bend facilities.



Keep In Mind

Indiana Protection & Advocacy Services:

317-722-5555 or

1-800-622-4845

Div. of Disability, Aging & Rehab
Services:

800-545-7763

Div. of Mental Health & Addiction:

800-901-1133

MSDC/MSH Info Hot Line:

800-903-9822

Ombudsman: **800-622-4484**

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Future Issues

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- ◆ Your Ideas

When one door closes another
door opens; but we so often look
so long and so regretfully upon the
closed door, that we do not see the
ones which open for us.

Alexander Graham Bell

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